3:Naah E-5 (1964-1965)1967
NV9 Tzeltal NV9
[p.457-B] Teklum

682 epidemic (two cases), when people have drunk
[755] a great deal and their motive is fresh in their
[273] mind.

The settings in which homicides occur indi-
682 cate that a killer is expressing not his own
152 bravery but rather his fears. Wounds are fre-
154 quently inflicted from the rear, and often the
[273] victim is outnumbered and set upon by a group. The victim is sometimes invited to drink with his killer(s), and in this session he is disarmed psychologically and physically. Alcohol reduces the chance of his effective reaction, and this is important when a knife or machete is used. Shotgun killings are done at a distance and do not require this tactic, although it may still be employed. For drinking
682 serves to reduce the killer's own fears. Drink
273 "heats the blood" and makes unusual be-
152 havior possible. One killer, in recounting his act, was not trying to prove bravery, but rather his own good judgment and cool-headedness. The killer fired at the victim while he was sleeping, his back turned to the door, and killed him. The shot also entered the arm of the
[695] sleeping man's wife. She saw the killer as he
[683] left the scene, but testified in court that she had seen no one. She was, in effect, accepting his verdict that her husband was a witch.[4] This homicide was not regarded by the killer or by anyone else as a heroic act, nor was the killer in recounting it attempting to emphasize anything other than the necessity of the act.

682 *Instrumentality: Weapons and Wounds*
• 411

gun	14
machete	6
gun and machete	4
knife	3
knife and gun	1
knife and machete	1
knife and stone	1
hatchet	1
nail	1
sandals	1
??	4

The variety of weapons reduces the question of any technological determinism to a minimum. The actual weapon used seems to be a matter of convenience. When more than one is used, it is usually evidence that the assailant had helpers. The nail is unusual. It was hammered into the jaws of a man who had entered the curing profession at an age considered too
682 young. The attack on the jaws of the victim
774 seems related to the power of speech and to the
756 [text continues on p. 461-B]

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3:Nash E-5 (1964-1965) 1967 MV9 Trelta1 MV9
[P.458] Tekium

TABLE 1. CASE ANALYSIS OF HOMICIDES OCCURRING FROM 1938 TO 1965
(AS RECALLED FROM MEMORY BY THREE INFORMANTS)*

CASE No.	DATE	AGE	WEAPON	WOUNDS	PLACE	TIME	SUSPECTS	MOTIVE	OUTCOME
1	1938—fiesta in neighboring town	50	pistol, machete	head cut off	in houseyard of borrowed house in neighboring town	afternoon	?	Accused of witchcraft	No one apprehended.
2	1945	65	pistol	shot between eyes	in street	night	two drinking companions (relatives of victim)	Drunken quarrel	Two companions went to jail. While in jail, with help of witch from neighboring town, set fire to four houses in pueblo.
3	1946	48	machete (brothers disarmed him of shotgun)	?	road at outskirts of town, at cross	dawn (5 A.M.)	brothers: 1 elder, 2 younger	Curer, suspected of being witch.	One brother went to jail for five years.
4	1946	45	machete	well chopped up	neighboring hamlet	?	?	"I don't know what crime he had. He was a curer."	No one went to jail.
5	1946—fiesta San Francisco	38	machete and gun	well cut up, head and neck	in woods	?	?	Accused of witchcraft.	No one complained.
6	1946	50	shotgun	?	in street	night, after curing ceremony, very drunk	?	Curer, accused of witchcraft.	Wife complained, but no witness.
7	1958	27	nail	in throat	in street	night, after curing ceremony	father of boy who died of witchcraft	Curer, accused of witchcraft.	Before dying, victim revealed name of killer, but local authorities would not arrest him. Case went to higher court, but no witnesses.
8	1960—11/28	60	machete	cut off head	in street	night, after curing ceremony	son-in-law	Accused of witchcraft by curer at ceremony for daughter.	Son-in-law fled town.
9	1960—12/18 fiesta, Sta. Lucia	28	knife, machete	heart, throat, stomach	?	?	killer paid by cattle owners	Stole cattle.	Released killer on bail of 2,500 pesos paid by cattle owners.

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3:Nash E-5 (1964-1965) 1967 MV9 Tzeltal MV9
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[P.459]

10	1960—12/18 fiesta, Sta. Lucia	60	shotgun	shot in back—bullet entered lung	homeyard, two feet from house	7 P.M., after curing ceremony	brother-in-law	Curer, accused of witchcraft.	No one apprehended.
11	1961—6/16	70	machete	many wounds	near highway	9 P.M., after gathering of curers	neighbors	Curer, accused by other curers of being witch causing epidemic.	Neighbors were not identified.
12	1961	35	shotgun	shot in back	highway	?	leader of political independence movement (wife's brother)	Refused to pay tribute to independence leaders.	Killer's wife (victim's sister) left husband. No one jailed. Later, killer killed by victim's brother [case 18].
13	1961—7/26 fiesta in neighboring hamlet	30	?	?	street, near cantina	late at night	wife's brother	Very abusive, fought drunks.	Wife's brother fled town.
14	1961—10/24 fiesta in neighboring hamlet	45	knife	many wounds	?	?	neighbors	Accused of being witch by neighbors.	No one apprehended.
15	1961—12/15 fiesta, Sta. Lucia	37	gun	?	cantina	late at night	?	Accused of witchcraft.	Wife agreed he was witch.
16	1962—9/25	18	?	?	?	?	rival for girl	Fought over girl.	No one accused.
17	1962—9/25	20	knife	stabs	in street	night (1 A.M.)	cattle owners	Accused of stealing cattle.	Went to jail, but released on bail put up by cattle owners.
18	1962—9/26	35	gun	shot in head	highway	(4 P.M.)	brother-in-law's brother	Revenge—victim had killed his own brother-in-law [case 12].	Killer declared he had killed. Paid fine and went free.
19	1962—11/15 fiesta, All Saints	20	knife, gun	stabbed in heart and shot	drinking in cantina	late at night	rival for girl	Fought over girl.	No one accused.
20	1962—12/24 fiesta, Christmas Eve	50	gun	shot between eyes	road outside town	dawn (6 A.M.)	leader of cattle association	Accused of stealing cattle.	?
21	1963—4/4	36	hatchet	head	in woods, given drink by killers	5 P.M.	?	Curer, accused of witchcraft.	No one apprehended. Brother did some investigating.
22	1963—7/24	45	?	?	in bed	night, after curing ceremony	Curer from neighboring town	Victim had accused suspect of being a witch when curing a patient.	Nothing.

* Two more homicides were recalled for 1964 than official records show. They most probably occurred in a previous year.

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3:Naab E-5 (1964-1965) 1967 NW9 Tzeltal NW9
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TABLE 1 (*cont.*)

Case No.	Date	Age	Weapon	Wounds	Place	Time	Suspects	Motive	Outcome
23	1963 - 8/28 fiesta, San Augustin	?	sandals	kicked to death	in cantina	afternoon	drinking companions	Barroom brawl	One of two assailants arrested, bailed out.
24	1963 9/25	70	shotgun	forehead	in field	late afternoon	sons of man whom he was accused of having killed by witchcraft	Accused by curers in neighboring towns of having caused sickness	Nothing.
25	1964 1/2 fiesta, New Years	30	machete, gun	?	street outside house of new president	night (11 P.M.)	killer paid by brothers	Accused of stealing cattle	Brother fled, but was jailed when he returned.
26	1964 - 2/3 Carnival	34	gun, machete	chopped up with machete	street, one block from house	night (11 P.M.)	?	Accused of witchcraft by neighbors.	No one accused.
27	1964 - 8/15	40	gun	forehead	highway	afternoon	Ladino liquor distiller, not of community	Victim had denounced distiller to federal authorities.	No one accused.
28	1964—9/1	30	gun	?	milpa, after his brothers gave him drink	afternoon	his brothers	Accused of witchcraft	One brother fled. The other was jailed but claimed the first one did it.
29	1964 9/14	65	knives	many knife wounds	street, three blocks from house	late at night, after gathering of curers	curers	Curer, accused by other curers of being witch causing epidemic.	No one accused.
30	1964	22	?	?	eight meters from his house	night (1 A.M.)	close friend, hired by cattle owners, brothers of killer	Accused of stealing cattle.	Freed on bail.
31	1965 - 2/14	42	machete	head cut off	road to neighboring hamlet	night (1 A.M.)	?—at first thought it was wood spirit, until they found head	?	No one accused.
32	1965—2/22	45	knife, stone	stabbed in heart, head hashed	street near house	night	?	Accused of witchcraft by neighbors.	No one accused.
33	1965—3/21 Carnival	45	shotgun	?	street	night	?	Accused of witchcraft.	No one apprehended.

3:Nash E-5 (1964-1965) 1967
NW9 Tzeltal NW9
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34	1965 4/24		27	gun	?	found in woods, body dragged there from town	night (1 a.m.)	brother-in-law	He had relations with 14-year-old sister-in-law. When he tried reconciliation, became drunk, abusive	No witness, no blood found in in-laws' house.
35	1965 5/30 fiesta, just before San Francisco		35	shotgun	three shots entered back	road	afternoon	?	Stole cattle, corn.	Killers left note saying old man did it, but no one believed it.
36	1965 8/13		42	machete	head severed, side wounds	road to mojon	6 P.M.	son by first marriage	Failed to help son get a wife; accused by dying wife of causing her death by witch craft.	Widow spread rumors that it was his son, but refused to testify.
37	1965 10/?		40	shotgun	back	in houseyard	6 P.M.	rival for girl	Accident – killer mistook him for his brother, who was challenging killer's suit for a girl.	?

3:Nash E-5 (1964-1965)1967
NV9 Tzeltal NV9
[p.461-B] Teklum

682 794 756 location of the soul, *sč'ulel*, in the tongue, *yat*, wherein lies the particular power of the curer. This possibly suggested the mode of attack.

682 411 412 [223] [224] The instruments used to kill are carried by the farmers of this area most of the time. The men go to their milpa with a machete strapped to their side, a shotgun slung over their shoulder, and sometimes even a knife stuck in their waistband. They frequently interrupt work to hunt birds, rabbits, and deer. The shotgun does not excite suspicion or comment when it is seen. The men of Teklum are technologically prepared to kill in the course of an ordinary day's work.

682 [152] [683] The number of wounds and the thoroughness with which the job is done (see Table 1) suggest not so much the fury of the assailants as the fear motivating their act. In a witch-killing, it appears to be thought necessary to hack up the victim completely so that his power is effectively ended: one witch was cut into 32 pieces; another had 166 wounds.

682 674 656 The death acts drawn up in the local courthouse have been increasingly specific in their statements as to the wounds inflicted ever since the government's intervention in the case of an accidental death in 1950. The local authorities were threatened with a fine of 600 pesos if the details were not properly recorded. The careful measurement of the body in relation to the road and to neighboring milpas and the measurement of the size and depth of the wounds provide the screen of complicity that wards off further investigation by federal authorities and preserves local independence. There is never any questioning of suspects or attempt to solve the crime by officials. The success of the ploy is illustrated in the following account:

> Pedro had animals at the spring and had gone out early with ropes in his bag to lasso them. He was found with a rope tied around his neck hung from a *čikinič* tree. We went out and measured the length and thickness of the rope and how many centimeters it penetrated his neck. We put all these facts in the report, which gave the cause of death as suicide.
>
> At that time we had a schoolteacher in town who asked the dead man's wife why the town didn't investigate who killed him because someone must have done it. He went with the widow to the Ministerio Publico in the capital. Well, when they came out, there were all the facts in the death act. [Informant laughed heartily as he recalled this success.] He saw that we had discovered the body at 3 P.M., that the rope was 15 meters

283 the ground. This disc has two hooks to
413 which the fiber is knotted; when the disc is turned by a crank, it braids the fibers into rope. A thick board, smoothed by a metal knife (manufactured by the Indians from iron pieces bought in the city), is used to scrape the pita and remove the fiber.

407 The most complex machine that the Tzel-
[177] tal own and build is the wooden cane press, which was imported by the Spaniards to grind sugarcane (fig. 6). This machine is operated by two men, who move the rollers by a handle (*kabal-té*) at each end of the
[415] machine. The juice pressed out by the rollers drops into fluted containers made of pieces
293 of banana tree, and finally into a pot. This juice is used in the preparation of an alcoholic beverage, *chicha* (*chi-ja*, 'sweet water'), and for panela. Chicha is prepared by
[415] fermenting this juice by bran, corn, or wheat, in a special container (*canoja*) made from a fluted tree trunk. The bran or other fermenting agent is *smé-chi-já* ('mother of
[184] the chicha'). Some communities (Tenejapa, Cancúc, Oxchuc) have greater preference for this beverage than other Tzeltal groups.

224 A gun has become very common in hunt-
411 ing. Sometimes (Oxchuc and Tenejapa)
[412] rabbits are taken by striking them with a coa, after cornering them with the aid of dogs. Blom and LaFarge (1926–27, 2:352) state that the Tzeltal of the lowlands usually hunt wild boar with long wooden spears with fire-hardened or metal points. Traps protect the milpa as well as snaring game.

41 Cooking utensils are mainly indigenous. The usual set consists of clay containers of varying size and shape, jícaras, baskets, wooden spoons, a comal, a metate, hooks, and wooden tripods for hanging items over
177 the fire. In the last few years metal pots,
404 dishes, frying pans, boiling pans, and espe-
415 cially handy *nixtamal* mills (which are gradually displacing the grinding stone)
177 have been introduced. Other items that
207 come from the city are flashlights, small
405 kerosene lamps, watches, scissors, and (in-
412 frequently) battery radios.
416
[P 206-B]

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Bachajón

mate butt of any joke, contemptible, and with no inherent rights. The native ceremonies and beliefs, even when closely parallel to their own, are considered mere ignorant superstitions. Only what is definitely Catholic is respected. Small shrines may be desecrated at will. Behind all this, mindful of past uprisings, lies a certain amount of definite fear of the subject people. There are, of course, many exceptions, especially among the more intelligent ranchers who from their patriarchal position or intimate relations have come to understand the natives as human beings.

The effect of all this on the Indian is suspicion of the ruling class, reluctance to impart information, distrust of friendly overtures. If one hails an Indian in the streets of a town, he will frequently run away. Once convinced, however, that an individual actually likes them, and is genuinely interested in them, their response is warm. We received many small favours and acts of friendship in notoriously hostile villages.

Fig. 283—El Real, Chis. Tzeltal girls.

In their culture these people belong to the general type characteristic of all Southern Mexico and at least the nearer parts of Guatemala. They depend primarily upon farming for their livelihood, with corn as the staple crop. Calabashes, melons, beans, tobacco, bananas, and cotton are raised. The farming is carried on by the same wasteful "milpa system" that has been described in Chapter XI, the old Maya method that was eventually responsible for the abandonment of many cities. In the case of the Bachajon, it has already become one cause for deserting their villages. The chief food is dried corn boiled with lime and ground by the women on the stone metates which were described in dealing with the Indians of San Martín Pajapa. It then may be baked on a flat griddle, making tortillas, or kept to drink with water as *posole*. The one universal tool and weapon is the machete, varying in form from tribe to tribe, but always made by Collins & Co., of Hartford—part of one of the most amazing industries in the world.

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Bachajón

amazing industries in the world. In addition, most men own smooth-bore flint-lock muskets, a few having progressed to percussion caps. The bow and arrow occurs occasionally as a child's toy.

The Bachajon men dress in cotton clothing, made of material bought in Ocosingo, or, more rarely, of home weave (fig. 284). The shirt is cut without tails, the trousers are of European type save that they tie with a string and have no buttons. Ordinarily they are worn rolled up above the knee. Over the trousers is worn a sash of native weave, red with fringed ends, and often decorated with black and yellow design in lines, sometimes forming a plaid effect. The sash is wound around, crossing in front, then turned back on itself, and the ends tucked under behind, so that they hang down below the shirt (fig. 285).

FIG. 284—El Encanto, Chis. A Bachajon Medicine Man.

Shirts of native weave occasionally have fine coloured lines running through them. The opening, which runs about two-thirds of the way down the front, the cuffs, and the seams at the shoulders may be decorated with very simple stitching. Down the front is a row of small buttons, coloured if possible, not all of which are for use. The most admired arrangement seems to be an alternation, such as red, black, white, repeated, although cases were observed in which no two were alike. These buttons are bought at the stores.

Sandals, *tep*, are ordinarily of leather, a thick sole with simple heel-toe string and loop. The leather is usually bought ready-cut. Formerly they were made of *mahagua* bast wicker-work, in form corresponding to that found in Basket-Maker sites of the Southwestern United States,* and these are still occasionally woven. The finest specimens are dyed red with a bark. Bast sandals are called *canak* (fig. 286).

*Kidder and Guernsey, 1919, Page 160 et seq.

5: Blom & LaFarge A, E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Bachajón

necks and round bottoms. Two were full of corn and lime for tortillas, just off the fire. A big Tenango jar, *k'ip*, of the kind to be described at that place, was used for water.

A pottery dish, about 7 centimeters across, *tsets*, is commonly offered to guests to wash their hands. It is placed on a pottery stand of an hour-glass shape, about 15 centimeters high, *awaliko* (see fig. 299). The ordinary plates and general vessels are flat gourd dishes, *qai'*, about 20 centimeters across. Gourds as well were used for a dipper, *tuts*, and a water-jar, *tsuk*. Two nets hung from the rack. There were three small baskets, *tutemotc*, and four big ones, *mukulmotc*. Hanging on the wall were a pair of the basket-work sandals mentioned before, and selected ears of corn for seed. The wife's textile outfit, more fully described later, consisted of a spindle, *pětět*,

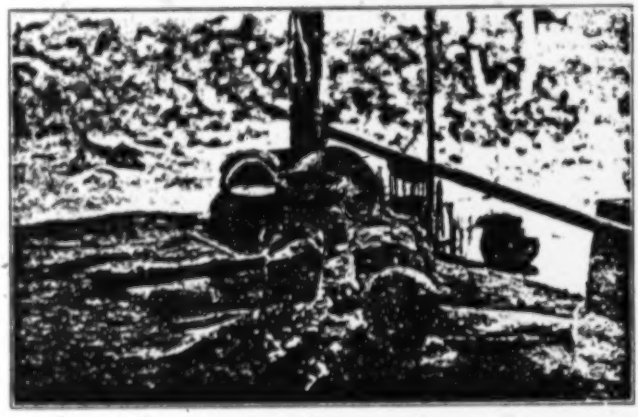

FIG. 281—Bachajon Fireplace.

with clay whorl, spun in a gourd bowl, *tsima*, cotton, *t'umin*, hanging in leaves, and the loom itself, *holčl*. A sling, made of a forked stick and rubber band with a leather piece to take the clay pellet, *finmutc*, belonged to the small boy. Bananas were drying on the rack. With them were laid, or hanging in packages of leaves, beeswax, *tcavek*, blocks, 20 x 20 x 2 centimeters, for trade purposes, used for making candles, a lump of hard red clay, *baq lum* ("bitter earth"), for washing the hair, and sometimes also eaten, a package of brown loaf sugar, salt, *atsam*, traded down from the Zotzil country, several packages of pimiento pepper, and serpent fat, *junto tcan*, for rubbing on the chest to cure coughs. Under the table was a basket of coarse, blackish-gray clay for making pottery, *tcavek lum* ("beeswax earth"). Five wild boars' jaws and an armadillo's tail

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Bachajón

Five wild boars' jaws and an armadillo's tail hung in the eaves so that the dogs might see them, to prevent their going away or losing heart. A swizzle stick, *mahas*, about 40 centimeters long, was used for stirring cocoa. It is made by cutting a twig above a joint with four branches. Two rat traps, *yakul*, just outside the hut, were exact models of the larger deadfalls used for jaguars (see fig. 308).

Add to this the clothes on the inhabitants backs, and the man's machete, and you will have a complete list of the worldly possessions, large and small, of a Bachajon family—altogether some forty-four different kinds of things. We assembled as many together as possible, arranging them as for a feast, and placed in the middle the small son of the house, and a little monkey of a boy, Miguel, who accompanied us to run errands (fig. 292).

FIG. 292—Bachajon boy guests

If mud-plastered walls are added to this description, you have a typical Ocosingo Valley house. Change the grass roof to palm, it is the kind to be seen in the jungle country.

At Muxculja (*muckul ha*, "Covered Water"), in the jungle, our Indians built us a trail shelter or hut of the type called in Spanish *champa*, and in Tzeltal *tutna'*, "small house." This enabled us to note the manner of building the frame-work and laying on the roof. The kind of *champa* built for us, with an A-roof and gable ends, is called *gwakac na'*, "cow house"; the more common type built by the Indians when alone, a simple lean-to, is called *lestce-pat* (should be *lestce-pahk?*) "only one wall."

Our shelter being more than usually pretentious, we could observe most of the steps in building a true house, although, of course, the form here was different and the construction much lighter (figs. 293-294). It was three meters, fifty-one centimeters long by three meters wide, two meters high at the ridge-pole, one at the eaves. It had no walls. From the construction of the outline of the frame to the completed thatching it took fifty minutes for four men, later only two, working without haste.

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

224 The Chief weapon used in hunting is
• 411 the muzzle-loading smooth-bore gun, really a shot-gun, usually loaded with shot. Both flint-locks and percussion caps are known, and occasionally match-locks are made by the Indians themselves, the barrels being bought in the towns, or taken from old guns. Powder is carried in a cow's horn, which sometimes also serves as a flask.

Wild boar is sometimes hunted with spears, *mojara*, made of sticks with points hardened in the fire, although iron-headed spears are known, having been used in the Uprising of 1868. The latter form, however, does not appear to be made at present. Spears left
[669] over from the Uprising are highly valued and cannot be bought. That they were brought out of hiding during a period of unrest at Bachajon in 1915 is considered one of the proofs that a real revolt was planned at that time.

224 Dogs take part in the chase, their use being connected with some
231 curious superstitions. It is a common practice in Mexico to cut a

224

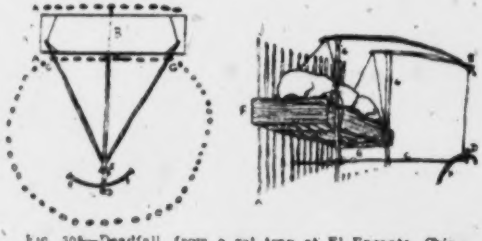

FIG. 308—Deadfall, from a rat trap at El Encanto, Chis.
A. Plan. B. Sketch of essential parts.

224 piece off a dog's ear and keep it in the house if he shows a tendency
231 to roam, or to go hunting alone. If he will not follow a trail, a similar piece is cut off and thrown on it. The Indians keep jaw-bones or other trophies of animals killed with the dogs' help hung in a conspicuous place under the eaves of the house; the object being to remind the dogs of their achievements, and to keep them from losing heart during a period of no hunting.

223 Birds, as well as being hunted, are caught with snares and with limed twigs.

224 Dead-falls, *yakul*, are used to trap animals, both for game, and to protect the fields. They are substantially all of one pattern, the drawing for which was taken from a rat-trap in the house at El Encanto (*fig.* 308). The deadfall consists essentially of a log, F, weighted with stones, held suspended in two slings, which hang from the ends of two sticks, EE, resting over two forked uprights, GG. The two sticks cross each other at the further end, where they are

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

vest. Harvesting is done by all the members of the household, sometimes with the assistance of exchange or hired labor. Women help by going to the fields and degraining the cobs with few kernels of corn so that there will not be an unnecessary burden to carry to the houses.

A small fiesta for the corn is made following the harvest. The purpose of the fiesta is to reciprocate the spiritual owner of the corn by giving him a "gift." Two candles are lit and set on top of the piles of corncobs. Two other candles are placed near the heaps of corn grains gathered by the

TABLE 7. Stages of Corn Growth and Agricultural Activities

Stages of growth	*Activity*	*Time (after planting)*
Šlihk sčital (begins to grow)	First hoeing	8 days
Čištal lik ?išim (well-grown; about 4 feet)	Second hoeing	1 month
Čištal stekan spi? (begins to form husk)		2 months
B'al tzuto (begins to bud)		
Lok'iš tzutohal (flower comes out)		3 months
Yihiš sk'ab'enal (begins to mature)		4 months
Lok'iš yihkatz (cobs fill out)		
Sčam hol (its head dies)	Pick cobs to eat fresh	5 months
Yihištal sk'anubiš (now more yellow)	Double over stalks	6 months
Yihubiš (more yellow)		
Tahkiniš (dry)		
Sk'ahik lok'el (harvest time)	Pick dried corn	7 months

women. The candles cause the spirit of the corn to rise and give its "gift to the world" in the following harvest. Failure to make a fiesta would mean an end to all corn harvests.

Corn is brought to the house and stored in the rafters, since there are no corn cribs or separate storage facilities of any kind in the village. Most of the houses are infested with rats as a consequence. When the harvest is brought in, there is an attempt to rid the rafters of these "thieves." The men and boys armed with slingshots stand posted in the yard as the children rustle around in the rafters chasing the rats out. Although they are remarkably good shots since they use this tool from early childhood, the houses are never completely free of rats, and the inhabitants learn to put up with them.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

the larger ones their mothers make, but their products are usually not commercially saleable until they reach the age of marriage. Their responsibility in preadolescence is to bring water from the faucets installed in every other block of the town, and to degrain corn, tend the fire as the *nixtamal*, or corn dough mixed with lime, cooks, and help their mother grind it. The careful assessment of the child's capacity to perform tasks is exemplified by the gradations of water-carrying jars given to each child: the older the child, the larger the jar, with minute variations in scale. The close, usually wordless cooperation between women in a household comes from years of working together and knowing their part in cooperative tasks.

Boys accompany their fathers to the fields after they reach the age of six and when they are not attending school. They do not participate in the work of the milpa until they are eight or older, but they pick up twigs for the fire or gather the wild berries or plants which supplement the diet of the family. They usually carry slingshots with which they kill field rats and birds, which they bring home to cook and eat. Teaching a boy the tasks involved in agriculture is consciously undertaken by older brothers or the father when the child reaches the age of twelve or thirteen. The following reminiscence of this training is given by a man who had been brought up by his widowed mother and brother.

I went to the field with my brother who is eighteen years older than I, when I was thirteen years old. My brother brought me to clean the milpa, saying, "Let us go and you will learn how to work. See what I do and you do the same. You will learn what I do and you can do the same."

One day I finished six rows. My brother said when he saw my work, "Good, just give a little more soil at the foot of the corn because the little corn must have a little soil. Now you do it well." "Yes," I said. He saw it was good, and he told me, "You have learned your work. You are going to forget it when you enter school. When you come out of school, go do two or three rows of work. When you hear the bell strike, go back to school."

He told my mother that I had learned to work, and she said, "Good you know how to cultivate." I learned to do my work better by going along with my elder brother in his work so that I would not forget.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

805 lating the time of day; when I questioned them as to the hour, they were often as much as an hour off, usually behind.

Most activities are ordered with reference to the Gregorian calendar, but the twenty-day Maya calendrical month, defined as "twenty days or a month" is used in much the same way that we use "a fortnight." The In-
805 dians consider the moon to be an uncertain indicator of time, since "she
821 does not walk well." But the moon is important in the culture: people note its different phases and are especially aware of the phase under which a child is born—an important sign for the newborn's future. If a baby is
[856] born at the full moon, he is expected to mature more readily. The full
[787] moon also signifies a propitious time for undertaking certain activities, such as cutting wood for the main posts of a house and cutting palm for the roof.

The Daily Schedule

512
462 Daily activities are organized by traditional economic pursuits. The woman is the first one to rise in the morning. She gets up at dawn, lights
[252] the fire, and sets a jar of water to boil for coffee. She grinds the nixtamal cooked the night before on the stone grinding board, or takes it to the mill
[412] in the center. She then makes tortillas either by hand or with a press; a re-
[177] cent innovation made of two hinged pieces of wood in which the ball of
[178] dough is set between pieces of plastic paper.

[264] The men of the household are served first, followed by the boys; the women and girls eat last. As soon as they have eaten, the men and boys who have finished the required three years of schooling go out to the
[481] fields to work. They walk single file even in the streets of the town, the fa-
[482] ther preceding his sons. Each carries a machete, net bag, tumpline, and sheepskin back-protector if he plans to carry any loads. Many bring shot-
[411] guns as well in order to hunt for field rats, raccoon, or the burrowing ani-
[224] mals they find in the fields.

After the men leave, the women go to the porch and "seize their work."
[857] The children go to school, which begins at eight-thirty in the morning
[872] and continues until five o'clock in the evening. They return home for
[264] lunch, a meal of tortillas, coffee, and sometimes beans or chayote when it is in season.